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RUEHDR/AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM PRIORITY 0069
RUEHDJ/AMEMBASSY DJIBOUTI PRIORITY 0060
RUEHHE/AMEMBASSY HELSINKI PRIORITY 0919
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RUEHKH/AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM PRIORITY 0611
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RUEHSM/AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM PRIORITY 0813
RUEHSI/AMEMBASSY TBILISI PRIORITY 5847
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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 03 USNATO 000361

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [NATO](#) [MARR](#) [MOPS](#) [AF](#) [PK](#) [UK](#) [XG](#) [RS](#)
SUBJECT: AUGUST 19 NORTH ATLANTIC COUNCIL MEETING:
AFGHANISTAN AND RUSSIA

REF: A. USNATO 359
[1](#)B. USNATO 348

Classified By: A/PolAd A. "Hoot" Baez. Reasons: 1.4 (b) and (d).

(C) SUMMARY: This is a summary of the August 19 meeting of the North Atlantic Council (NAC):

-- Afghanistan: Preparations for the August 20 elections dominated the discussion, with the Secretary General arguing that the elections represented a milestone in the ability of Afghan's to deliver their own governance. The Director of the International Military Staff confirmed that 100 percent of all election support forces had arrived in Afghanistan and were fully operational. The International Military Staff presented a briefing on the IED threat to ISAF forces. NATO hopes to meet next week with the UAE for further negotiations on AWACS basing. A discussion of the Shia law was reported ref A.

-- Russia: The Secretary General said he found his first meeting with Russian Ambassador Rogozin to be "overall positive." He intends to schedule an informal PermRep discussion of NATO-Russia relations soon after the August break. The U.S. expressed concern about statements by

Rogozin that suggest Russia is not committed to real reform of the NATO-Russia Council. The U.S. also noted the need to remain firm on the Alliance's position of Georgian territorial integrity.

END SUMMARY

Afghanistan

12. (C/REL NATO) Elections: At the August 19 meeting of the North Atlantic Council, NATO Secretary General Rasmussen said that the situation in Afghanistan was being dominated by the preparations for the August 20 elections. In this regard, he praised the efforts of the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) and ISAF. He argued that, despite certain short-comings, the elections were a milestone in Afghanistan's history: the Afghan-led elections demonstrated the Afghan's capacity to deliver their own governance.

13. (C/REL NATO) Elections Continued: The Director of the NATO International Military Staff (DIMS) confirmed that 100 percent of all election support forces had arrived in Afghanistan and were fully operational. He was confident in post-election contingency planning, citing strong commitments from Allies and increased ANSF capabilities. In Badghis province, local elders brokered a ceasefire deal between Taliban groups and the Afghan government to increase Pashtun participation in elections. In response to Germany,s

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question on whether President Karzai,s brother Ahmid Wali Karzai had done the same in the south to allow more Pashtuns to vote, DIMS did not deny nor confirm, citing a lack of evidence.

14. (S/REL NATO) Afghanistan IED Threat. In response to Allied questions in previous NAC meetings, the International Military Staff's Assistant Director for Intelligence, Karen Laino, provided a briefing on the improvised explosive device (IED) threat faced by ISAF forces in Afghanistan. She noted that IEDs had increased 88 percent when comparing the first six months of this year with the first six months of 2008. At the same time, she noted that civilian casualties from IEDs had not significantly increased, adding that was probably due to instructions from insurgent leadership. She said that most IEDs were rather basic and that the primary threat was from better employment of IEDs by the insurgents, rather than more sophisticated IEDs. At the same time, she acknowledged that there was evidence that Iran had provided some material support to the insurgent IED capability. Both DIMS and Laino said increasing ANSF support and NATO pre-deployment IED training was the best way to counter the IED threat. She noted some additional steps NATO could take to better counter this threat, including creating a NATO-wide IED database and working toward accreditation of a Center of Excellence on the subject in Spain.

15. (C/REL NATO) AWACS. In response to a question from the German Ambassador on the current status of AWACS deployment, NATO Deputy Assistant Secretary for Operations, Ambassador Rossin, said that his staff was trying to arrange talks with the UAE for the following week, but that it was not clear whether or not that would in fact take place. He said that the next round of talks should make clear whether the UAE's political will to conclude an agreement will provide sufficient flexibility in its position. If it does, Rossin hopes to be able to go back to the NATO Political Committee with an agreed arrangement. If it does not appear the UAE will have sufficient flexibility, he will said he would talk to the Secretary General about proposed next steps.

16. (C/REL NATO) Next NAC: Rasmussen announced that he had called for an extraordinary meeting of the Council on August 21 to discuss the August 20 elections. He said the the Commander of the NATO-led International Security Assistance

Force and the NATO Senior Civilian Representative in Kabul will address the NAC via video-teleconference.

¶7. (C/REL NATO) A discussion of the Shia law was reported in ref A.

Russia

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¶8. (C/NF) Rasmussen drew Allies attention to the report he had circulated on his first meeting with Russian Ambassador to NATO Rogozin (ref B). He said that he viewed the meeting as overall positive, adding that it appeared from the media coverage that Rogozin felt the same. He said, however, that he also felt the Alliance needed to remain firm in its discussions with Russia, noting that he had raised the Alliance's continuing commitment to an Open Door policy. Rasmussen said that he intended to raise NATO-Russia relations in one of PermReps' first informal meeting sessions after the August holiday. He said that he hoped that capitals will have had a chance to review the non-paper Rogozin provided him by that point.

¶9. (C/NF) Charge Byrnes noted concern with Rogozin's statements that Russia did not want to eliminate any NATO-Russia Council (NRC) Working Groups, suggesting that this might indicate that Russia was not serious about taking forward the NRC reforms proposed in the draft "way forward" paper which Ministers had agreed at Corfu to continue to work on. She also said that it was important when remaining firm and talking frankly with Russia to remind Russia of the Alliance's position on Georgian territorial integrity. In response, Rasmussen said that he intended to press for reform of the NRC, while recognizing that this would not be easy. He failed to respond, however, to the issue of Georgian territorial integrity.

¶10. (C/NF) Canada urged that the forthcoming PermRep discussion of NATO-Russia relations include the issue of Russia-Ukraine relations.
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